A SERMON

Preach'd before the

KING,

May 9. 1675.

BY

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Dean of DURHAM, and Chaplain
in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

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PHILIP. iv. 22.

All the Saints ſalute you, chiefly they that are of Cæſars Houſhold.

THis Epiſtle was written by St. *Paul* when he was a Priſoner at *Rome*, as we may ſee in the firſt Chapter, *verſ.* 13. where he ſpeaks of his *bonds in Chriſt*, *which were manifeſt in all the Palace*; and here again among the ſalutations, which he ſends to the *Philippians* from all the Saints, he makes a particular mention of thoſe of *Cæſars* Houſehold; *All the Saints ſalute you, chiefly they that are of Cæſars Houſhold.*

We ſee ſee then that there were Saints at *Rome*, when St. *Paul* wrote *this* Epiſtle, not only in the City, but at the *Court*. Now who theſe *Saints* were, and why here is ſo particular a mention of thoſe of *Cæſars* Houſhold, are

the *Points* which we are here to conſider.

And firſt, by the *Saints*, without all doubt, he meant the *Chriſtians*, for that is the *name* by which he commonly calleth them, the *name* by which they were called before they were called *Chriſtians*; for they were called Chriſtians firſt at *Antioch*, where he and *Barnabas* had ſpent a whole year in ſettling a *Church* of them, as we read, *Acts* 11. 26. but they were called *Saints* before he was called to be an *Apoſtle*; for they whom he perſecuted at *Jeruſalem*, are called the *Saints* at *Jeruſalem*, Acts 9. 13.

This name of *Saints* was appropriated by the *Greeks* to their *Prieſts*, becauſe they were *conſecrated* after their manner to the ſervice of thoſe whom they called *Gods*. But upon a better account it was *appropriated* by *God himſelf* to the people of *Iſrael*, whom he conſecrated to himſelf, *Exod.* 19. 6. *Ye ſhall be unto me a Kingdom of Prieſts, and a holy Nation.* And *Deut.* 14. 2. *Thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath choſen thee to be a peculiar people unto himſelf, above all the Nations that are upon the Earth.* But the people of *Iſrael* were herein, as in ſome other things, the types and figures of thoſe of the *Chriſtian* Church, whom St. *Paul* calls the *Iſrael of God*, Gal. 6. 16. and of whom St. *Peter* ſaith, *Ye are a choſen Generation, a Royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people*, 1 Pet. 2. 9.

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The name of *Saints* is *appropriated* to them upon ſeveral accounts, of which I will mention but two.

1. Upon the account of their moſt holy *profeſſion*, of the moſt *pure*, and *holy*, and *perfect* Religion that ever was, or ever *can* be. For to ſay nothing of the Religion of the *Heathen*, which ſerv'd not to *ſanctifie*, but to make them *more* unholy: The Religion of the *Jews* was not ſo *pure* and *holy* and *perfect*; for though it was inſtituted by *God*, it was not inſtituted by him as the *beſt*, but the beſt that they were *then capable* of: for beſides the Laws, which were indulg'd to them for the *hardneſs of their hearts*, as Chriſt ſaith of the Law of Divorce, *Matth.* 19. 8. Their Religion was incumbred with diverſe Laws about *meats and drinks, and diverſe waſhings, and carnal Ordinances, impoſed on them, until the time of Reformation*, Heb. 9. 10. which is a manifeſt evidence that they were not the *beſt*, but only the beſt for *them* at that time; for if they had been the *beſt*, they could not have been capable of a reformation, *For if that firſt Covenant had been faultleſs, then ſhould no place have been ſought for the ſecond*, Heb. 8. 7. But this ſecond Covenant is called *the everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. becauſe it is ſo *pure*, and *holy*, and *perfect*, that it is not capable of a reformation. For no *precepts* can be more *pure* and *holy*, no *promiſes* more

high

high and *heavenly*, no *confirmations* of them more *divine*. For what *precepts* can be more *pure* and *holy* than that of *cleanſing our ſelves from all pollution both of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1? and that of being *holy in all manner of converſation, as he who hath called us is holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 15? and many more to the like purpoſe. What promiſes can be more *high* and heavenly than that of an *inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for us*, 1 Pet. 1. 4? *The Kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world*, Mat. 25. 34? and many the like expreſſions of it. What *confirmation* can be more *divine* than that of a *Covenant*, in which God hath made *himſelf* a *party*, of which the *Son of God* is the *Mediator*, of which his *blood* is the *ſeal*, and all the *miracles* wrought *by* him in his *Fathers* name, and upon him in his *Reſurrection* from the dead, and all the *glory* that followed, are the hand of God, by which this Covenant was *ſign'd* by him, and the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, was the pledge and the earneſt? Which is therefore called a *better Covenant eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes*, Heb. 8. 6. better in many reſpects, and particularly in this, that it is more effectually to ſanctifie them that have made themſelves parties to it. *For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh*

to

to God, Heb. 7. 19. And the Goſpel is the bringing in of that *better* hope, a hope of which St. *John* ſaith, *Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure*, 1 Joh. 3. 3.

2. They were called Saints upon the *account* of their *lives* and *converſations*, which were agreeable to their *profeſſion*. For the primitive *Chriſtians* have a very good teſtimony both in the *Scriptures*, and from the *Heathen* among whom they lived. The *Scriptures* bear witneſs of their *conſtancy* and *ſtedfaſtneſs* in obſerving that *rule*, which they had received from the *Apoſtles*, of their *piety* and *devotion* to *God*, of their *unanimity* among themſelves, of their *mutual offices* of Love and Charity, of their *ſincerity* and *ſingleneſs* of *heart*, of their *patience* in ſuffering afflictions, for the tryal of their Faith, and the teſtimony of their conſcience, not only *without* complaining, but with *rejoycing*. *They continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in Prayers*, Acts 2. 42. *And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from houſe to houſe, did eat their meat with gladneſs and ſingleneſs of heart, praiſing God, and having favour with all the people*, verſ. 46, 47. And in the ſixth Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* we read of their work and labour of love, which was ſo good, that God could no more

forget it than he could be *unjuſt*, verſ. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have ſhewed toward his name.* And *Heb.* 10. 32. we read of a *great fight of affliction, which they endured*, not only without repining, but with rejoycing, as it follows at the 34. *verſ. Ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods, knowing in your ſelves that ye have in Heaven a better and an enduring ſubſtance.*

And though the *Heathen* among whom many of them liv'd, were willing to accuſe them of great crimes and enormities, to render them the more hateful; they knew them to be ſo *innocent* and *free* from them, that they never offered to make any *proof* of them, but did in effect confeſs that they had *nothing* to object to them, but that they were Chriſtians, as *Tertullian* expreſſeth it, *Bonus vir Caius Seius, malus tantùm quòd Chriſtianus*; *Caius Seius* is a good man, he hath no fault but that he is a *Chriſtian.* Such were the primitive *Saints*, and ſuch were they at *Rome*, for it is of them that St. *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 15. 14. *I am perſwaded of you my brethren, that ye are full of all goodneſs.* And St. *Paul* did not ſay that to flatter them, for in the ſame Epiſtle he ſpeaks of their *Faith* and *Obedience* as things well known to the *world*; *Your Faith is ſpoken of throughout the world*, Rom. 1. 8. *Your obedience is come abroad unto all men*, Rom.

Rom.16.19. And for their *ſincerity* we need no other teſtimony than that of *Tacitus*, who ſpeaking of the Perſecutions, which they ſuffered for the teſtimony of it under *Nero*, ſaith that infinite numbers of them were convicted, of which ſome were *cloathed in the Skins of Beaſts*, and *torn* with *Dogs*, ſome were *Crucified*, ſome were *burnt* in the fire, and when the day failed, they were *burnt* in the night to give light, and that they were pitied, becauſe they ſuffered, not for any publick good, but to ſatisfie one mans cruelty. And as the Children of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplyed and grew, ſo did the *Saints* at *Rome*, ſo that *Rome* became more renowned for *Chriſtian piety* and *vertue*, than ever it had been for the *greatneſs* of her *power*, and the *largeneſs* of her *dominion*. The Church of *Rome* was then, and many years after, a Catholick Church, not becauſe it had Dominion over all other Chriſtian Churches, for that it had not; but becauſe it held the *Catholick* Faith, and all other Churches that held the *ſame* Faith, were *as Catholick* as it. And though the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, was very much *deſired* and *ſought* by *all* other *Chriſti-*

an Churches, by reaſon of the *eminence of the City*, and the ſplendour of the *Court*, and the free acceſs which the Biſhops of *Rome* had to the *Emperours*, when they became *Chriſtian*, and the great power which they had with him, eſpecially in the affairs of the *Church*; it was deſired and ſought *much* the rather, becauſe it held not only the *right* but the *entire* Faith, and was not only a *true* but a *ſound* Church.

But as a *ſound* man may grow *ſick*, ſo may a *ſound* Church alſo, and ſo did the Church of *Rome*: It grew ſo *ſick*, that we may ſay of it in the words of the Prophet, *The whole head is ſick, and the whole heart is heavy*. For the ſickneſs began with a *ſwelling* in the *head*, and ſoon after in the *body* of that Church, which is a diſeaſe to which the *Romans* were *naturally* ſubject. For that *pride* and *ambition*, which was the *firſt* ſin of the *Angels* that kept not their firſt eſtate, and the *firſt* ſin to which the *Devil* tempted *innocence* in *Paradiſe*, was, as St. *Jerome* ſpeaks, the *natural* vice of the *Romans*, which notwithſtanding the many warnings againſt it, given them by St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to them, *Rom.* 12. 3, &c. *I ſay through the grace given unto me to every man that is among you, not to think*

think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the meaſure of Faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the ſame office: ſo we being many are one body in Chriſt, and every one members one of another. And again at the tenth *verſe*, *Be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.* And yet again, *verſ.* 16. *Be of the ſame mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condeſcend to men of low eſtate. Be not wiſe in your own conceits.* I ſay, notwithſtanding all thoſe warnings, this *pride* and *ambition* prevailed ſo much upon the Church of *Rome*, that not content to be an *honourable* member of the *Catholick* Church, it would not allow any other Church to be *Catholick*, but ſuch as were *members* of it. And the *Biſhops* of *Rome*, not content to be *Biſhops* of *Rome*, as they were ſtil'd in the moſt *ancient* General *Councils*, and by the moſt ancient and *learned Fathers*, and in their own *ſubſcriptions*; nor with the honour of being the Biſhops of the *firſt* See, which honour they had, not becauſe it was the *Chair* of

Peter,

Peter, but becauſe it was the *Imperial* City; for when the Empire was remov'd to *Conſtantinople*, the Biſhops of that See had the ſame honour and priviledge with that of *Rome*, becauſe that was *New Rome*, which reaſon is expreſſed in the Canon: They had likewiſe the *honour* to be the *firſt Patriarchs* upon the ſame account; *firſt* in *order* of *Precedence*, not in *ſuperiority* of juriſdiction; for the other Patriarchs were not under the juriſdiction of the *Roman*, but had the ſame *Authority*, *Honour*, and *Power* within their *own* limits, which they of *Rome* had in *theirs*, and by the *ſame* right, which was not *divine* but *Eccleſiaſtical* right. But the Biſhops of *Rome* not content with all this *honour*, began to exalt their *Throne* above the *Stars* of *Heaven*, as St. *Gregory* expreſſeth it, to aſſume a power and authority over *all* other *Biſhops* and *Churches*, and to exerciſe a *juriſdiction* in and over them, by the name of *Univerſal* Biſhops, which he called a *prophane* name, and a name of *Blaſphemy*, a *preſage* of the near approach of *Antichriſt*. But though he was ſo *humble* and ſo *modeſt*, as not only to *refuſe* it, when

when it was given to him by *Eulogius* the Patriarch of *Alexandria*, but to rebuke him for it, calling it a *proud* title which *none* of *his Predeceſſors* had uſed, and which was a degrading of himſelf, and all other Biſhops; his *next* Succeſſor but one, who held the See but ſome few Months, knowing how much it was againſt the ancient *Canons* of the Church, and againſt the ſenſe of the moſt *learned Fathers*, and ſo injurious to all other *Biſhops*, that he could not think that they would be ſo tame as to yield it quietly to him; he procured the *Emperour* to confer that Title upon him; making uſe of the *temporal* Sword, as many of his Succeſſors did to wreſt the *ſpiritual* out of the hands of all other *Biſhops*, and exerciſing a *jurisdiction* over them, in receiving *Appeals* from them, in *reſervation of Caſes*, in *Collation to Benefices* which belonged to them, in *inflicting cenſures* within their limits, and upon them, in *abſolving* men from thoſe cenſures which were inflicted by them, in granting *Indulgences*, and *Diſpenſations* in matters of *Vowes*, *Order*, *Matrimony*, and in effect, leaving them the *Mitre* and the *Staff*, and

a part

a *part* of the care, aſſumed to themſelves the *fulneſs* of the Power. And having thus made uſe of the *temporal* Sword to get the *ſpiritual*, they made uſe of the *ſpiritual* Sword to get the *temporal*. For it was upon the account of this *ſpiritual* Sword, that they took upon them to *depoſe Emperours* and *Kings*, to *diſpoſe* of their *Dominions*, to excite other *Kings* to *invade* them with *force* of Arms, to diſcharge their *Subjects* from their *natural* obedience, to *abſolve* them from their *Oaths* of *Fidelity* and *Allegiance*, to ſtir them up to make *Conſpiracies*, to commit *Treaſons* and *Rebellions*.

And thus came the Church to be *rent* and torn with *Schiſms*, *Chriſtian Kingdoms* to be imbroyled in Wars and Blood, and the *World* filled with *ſcandals*.

The *Papacy*, which is the greateſt *Schiſm* that ever was in the *Church*, hath been the cauſe of *thirty Schiſms* in that Church of *Rome*; one of which laſted *fifty* years, and diverſe of the reſt had laſted longer than they did, had not the *Emperours* uſed that *Authority*, which they had then, to put an *end* to them. In which times, the

the Church of *Rome* was ſo far from being that *viſible* Church, with which all Chriſtians were bound to hold *Communion*, upon pain of Damnation, that it was not *viſible* where that Church of *Rome* was, with which they were bound to hold *Communion*; for having many times *two* heads, and ſometimes *three*, and each head had a *Body* which was joyned to it, and if the one were the *true*, the other muſt of neceſſity be *ſchiſmatical*; the world could not know with which of them it ſhould hold *Communion*, becauſe it could not know which was the *true*, and which was the *ſchiſmatical*. And if a *Canonical* Election were neceſſary to make a *true* head, it was many times *without a head*; while ſome invaded the See with *violence*, and *hands imbrued in Blood*; ſome with *Fraud*, and *Subtilty*; and ſome as the *Centurion* in the twenty ſecond Chapter of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, obtained the *freedom* of a *Roman*, with a *great ſumm of Money*. By which means the See was filled ſometimes with ſuch as were ſo *ignorant* and

unlearned, that their *own* Writers confeſs they had not ſo much as the *firſt Rudiments* of Learning: Sometimes with ſuch as were ſo *wicked*, that they call them *filthy Monſters of Men*; and ſometimes with *Novices*, within the years of their Minority, who were fitter to be put to *School* than to be placed in the *Apoſtolical Chair*, and were more glad that they were paſt the *fear* of the *Rod*, than that they had obtained the *Crofier Staff*, and the *triple Crown*.

It would require a long time to ſpeak of the many *bloody Wars*, which have been *made* and *cauſed* in the *Empire* and *Chriſtian Kingdoms*, by this uſurped power of the *two* Swords.

The errours and abuſes in *Doctrine* and *Worſhip*, againſt which there was a remedy before; that remedy which St. *Cyprian* mentions, *Subvenient Cæteræ*, if one Church fall into any *Errour*, let all other Churches bring it *out*. But this *exorbitant* power of the *Biſhops of Rome*,

Rome, hath not only *diſabled* all other Churches from bringing *that* or *any* other Church out of thoſe *Errours* and *abuſes* into which it might fall, but *enabled* them to bring *other* Churches into the ſame *Errours* and *Abuſes*.

The time would fail me, if I ſhould ſpeak of the many *Scandals*, which they have given by their *Pride* and *Ambition*, in exalting the *Mitre* above the *Crown*, and making them ſtoop to *kiſs their Feet*, at whoſe *Feet* their pious Predeceſſors were wont to *bow*, and *proſtrate* themſelves.

By their *Avarice*, in making *ſale* of thoſe things, which were *Sacred*, and raiſing vaſt ſumms of Money in *Chriſtian Kingdoms*, and particularly in *this*, upon *ſpecious* pretences, as if the *Keys* of Heaven had been made and put into their *hands* to *open* and *unlock* the Treaſures of the Earth.

By their *Cruelty*, in contriving and

countenancing *Maſſacres*, *Murders* of *Kings* and *Princes*, *Perſecutions* with *Fire* and *Sword*, *driving* Men as Sheep to the ſlaughter, inſtead of *leading* them to the *Paſture*, as if they had been ſet over them, not to *feed* but to *fley* them; and ſo making themſelves no leſs *hateful* to the *Chriſtian World*, than their Predeceſſors were *venerable*. But to leave them, and return to my *Text*, which ſpeaks not of *them*, but of the *Saints* at *Rome*.

Where it is not unworthy our Obſervation, how *ſpeedy* and *ſucceſsful* a progreſs the *Chriſtian Faith and Doctrine* had throughout the World, not only in the *Eaſtern Countries*, *Jeruſalem*, and all *Judæa*, and *Samaria*, the moſt famous Cities of *Aſia* and *Greece*, but in theſe *Weſtern* parts of the World, even at *Rome*, that *Proud* and *Stately* City, that was full of people, great among the Nations, and *Princeſs* among the Provinces, which had ſubdued mighty *Kingdoms* with the *force* of her Arms, and made her ſelf *dreadful* to the world with the fame of her

her *Victories*, and was then come to the *height* of all her *Pride* and *Glory*, and grown ſo *inſolent*, as to exalt her ſelf above all that is called *God*, or *Worſhipped*: For what elſe meant that *challenge*, which *Caius*, one of the *Ceſars*, ſent to *Jupiter*, *Thou ſhalt down with me, or I will down with thee*; and that Command which he gave under a great *pain* and peril, to ſet up his own *Statue* in the *Temple* of *Jeruſalem*, to be Worſhipped by the name of *Jupiter*; and that Decree of the *Senate*, that no God ſhould be Worſhipped at *Rome*, but by their leave? And yet we ſee it was not long before the ſound of the Goſpel, which began at firſt to be heard at *Jeruſalem*, was heard as far as *Rome*, and not only *heard* but *received*; not only by *Strangers* at *Rome*, *Jews*, and *Proſelytes*, but by *Romans*, for it was to them that St. *Paul* directed his Epiſtle, and it was of them that he ſaith, *Rom.* 1. 13. *I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, that oftentimes I purpoſed to come unto you* ——*That I might have ſome fruit among you alſo, even*

as

as among other Gentiles. And when he came to them, he had much fruit among them as among other *Gentiles*, even that fruit, which he promiſed himſelf, *Rom.* 15. 29. *I am ſure that when I come unto you, I ſhall come in the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt.* For as when he came to *Epheſus*, and Preached the Goſpel to them, *All they that dwelt in Aſia heard the Word of the Lord Jeſus, both Jews and Greeks*, Acts 19. 10. And when he came to the Cities of *Greece*, he made *Saints* in *Macedonia*, and all *Achaia*, as we read, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 7. and 2 *Cor.* 1. 1. So when he came to *Rome*, *Where he dwelt two whole years in his own hired Houſe, Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching thoſe things which concerned the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all confidence, no man forbidding him*, as we read in the laſt Chapter of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, the two laſt *verſes*; he made *Saints*, not only in the *City*, and in the *Country* about, but at the *Court*, as it follows in my Text, *Chiefly they that are of Cæſars Houſehold.*

The

The name of *Cæſar* was common to the *Roman Emperours*, particularly to the firſt ſix of them, of whom *Nero*, under whom St. *Paul* was a Priſoner, when he wrote this *Epiſtle*, was the *laſt*, and the *firſt* Perſecutor of the *Saints*. A man of that *prodigious* impiety, and iniquity, that *Tertullian* thought it was no *ſmall* honour to the *Saints*, that their *Blood* was *dedicated* by *Nero*; and that it was a good Argument that they were very worthy to be ranked among the *beſt* of men, becauſe they were the *moſt hateful* to him, who was ſo much the *worſt*. And it ſeems ſome of his *own Houſhold* were of the *ſame* mind and judgement; for they choſe rather to expoſe themſelves to his *rage* and *fury* by taking upon them the Profeſſion of *Saints*, than to ingratiate themſelves with him by a ſeeming *compliance* againſt them, with *all* the hopes of *honour* and advantage which they might have expected from his favour.

Who

Who theſe *Saints* were that were of *Cæſars* Houſhold, is neither eaſie to find, nor much material to enquire. For there is not much credit to be given to that, which ſome have ſaid of *Seneca* and *Lucan*, eſpecially that of *Lucan*. And although St. *Jerome* hath placed *Seneca* among the Eccleſiaſtical Writers, being provoked to it, (as he ſaith) by thoſe Epiſtles of *Paul* to *Seneca*, and *Seneca* to *Paul*, which are extant with us; it is much to be doubted, whether *Paul* or *Seneca* had any hand in thoſe Epiſtles.

The *Roman* Martyrologies mention *Torpetes*, one of *Nero's* Houſhold, and *Euelius*, one of his Councellours, who were not only *Saints* but *Martyrs* under him. St. *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks of a *Lady* of his Court, whom *Baronius* thinks to have been *Poppæa Sabina*, and cites an ancient Writer, who mentions *Proculus*, one of his Houſhold Servants. But not to enquire further who they were, this we

we find for *certain*, that when St. *Paul* wrote this Epiſtle, there were ſome of *Nero*'s Houſhold, whom he thought worthy of the name of *Saints*. Which is the more obſervable becauſe it is ſo incident to men, to conform themſelves to the minds and manners of thoſe, with whom they live, and familiarly converſe, that even *good company* is a very good meanes to reclaim men that are *vicious*. But as *ſound* men are more eaſily *infected* in the company of them that are *ſick*, than *ſick* men recovered in the company of them that are *ſound*: ſo good men are more eaſily *corrupted* in *bad* company, than *ill* men *reformed* in the company of them that are *good*. But it depends much upon the *will* and *choice* of men, whether they will be *corrupted* in the one, or reformed in the other. For there are ſome men ſo *much* addicted to *wickedneſs* and *vice*, that the *beſt* company cannot *reclaim* them; and there be others ſo *well* affected to *Piety* and *Vertue*, that the *worſt* company cannot *pervert* them. There

was a *Devil* in the Colledge of the *Apoſtles*, and there were *Saints* in the Houſhold of *Nero*. And not only *Saints*, but ſuch *Saints* as St. *Paul* thought worthy to be mentioned with a particular reſpect to them; for he doth not ſay, *All the Saints* ſalute you, and among them, they that are of *Cæſars* Houſhold, but *chiefly* they that are of *Cæſars* Houſehold.

Which may ſerve to ſhew a *particular* reſpect, which St. *Paul* had to thoſe *Saints* of the *Court*: he would not have them *loſt* in the *croud* of thoſe of the City; but would take notice of them, not only as of *Saints*, but as *Saints of Cæſars Houſhold*. For though it was not ſo much honour to the *Saints*, that ſome of them were of *Cæſars* Houſhold, as it was to *Cæſars Houſhold* that ſome of them were *Saints*; it was a good evidence that they were the better *Saints*, becauſe they were *Saints* of *Nero's* Houſehold. For as it is an Argument of a moſt wicked and perverſe diſpoſition of mind,

mind, to live in a Houſhold of *Saints*, and yet be *Idolaters* or *Infidels*: ſo it is as good an Argument of a good affection to piety and vertue to live in a Houſhold of *Idolaters* and *Infidels*, and yet to be *Saints*.

Our Saviour takes a *ſpecial* notice of it in the Angel of the Church of *Pergamos*, Rev. 2. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwelleſt, even where Satans ſeat is, and thou haſt beld my name, and haſt not denied my Faith.* And it is mentioned as a *ſingular* honour and praiſe of *Noah*, that *he was a juſt man in his Generation*, *Gen* 6. 9. Not only a *juſt* man, which is commendable in *any* man, of *any* place, at *any* time, but a juſt man in *his* Generation, a Generation in which *all fleſh had corrupted their way*, as it follows at the twelfth *verſe*. Such *Saints* are ſaid to ſhine as *Lights* in the World, *Phil.* 2. 15. *Be blameleſs and harmleſs, the Sons of God without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Generation, among whom ye ſhine as lights in the world.*

Secondly, This particular mention of the *Saints* in *Nero's* Houſhold, after the *general* mention of them among *all* the *Saints*, might ſerve very well to commend them to a more particular notice of the *Philippians*, which was very much to the ſcope of the *Epiſtle*. For the ſcope of the *Epiſtle* was to *arm* and *ſtrengthen* them againſt ſome *falſe* teachers crept in among them, of whom he gives them warning, Chapter 3. 2. *Beware of Dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the conciſion*; and *verſ.* 18, &c. he calls them *Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, whoſe glory is in their ſhame, who mind earthly things.* Theſe falſe Teachers took occaſion from St. *Pauls* bonds and impriſonment, to ſtrike a terrour into them, as we may ſee in the firſt Chapter, at the 28th *verſe*; and the better to *arm* the *Philippians* againſt them, he would have them take a *ſpecial* notice of this, at the *twelfth* and *thirteenth* Verſes, *I would have you to underſtand, Brethren, that the things which have happened unto me, have*

have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Goſpel: So that my bonds in Chriſt are manifeſt in all the Palace. St. *Paul* would have them to *underſtand* that his Chain with which he was bound for the name of *Chriſt*, had not ſo much *diſhonoured* him, as *honoured* that *name* for which he was *bound*; and that *Nero*'s malice and cruelty to the *Saints* had not ſo much ſhewed his *Power* and *Authority* over them, as betrayed his *weakneſs* and his *folly*. For that very means which he uſed to ſuppreſs the number of them, had ſerv'd to increaſe it, and while he thought to drive them all out of the *City*, he brought ſome of them into his *Court*. As therefore it was for the comfort and encouragement of the *Saints* of *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia*, and *Bithynia* that St. *Peter* concludes his Epiſtle to them with a ſalutation from the Church, which was in *Babylon*, 1 Pet. 5. 13. *The Church which is in Babylon, elected together with you, ſaluteth you*; ſo it was no leſs for the comfort and encouragement of the *Philippians*, that St. *Paul*

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concludes his *Epiſtle* to them, with a ſalutation from all the *Saints* at *Rome*, and chiefly from thoſe of *Cæſar's* Houſehold.

Now though my Text ſpeaks of *Saints* a great way off, at *Rome*, and in *Cæſar's* Houſhold, we may eaſily bring the Conſideration of it *Home*, to them who are not only of the Country, but of the *Houſhold* of *Kings*, who are *Defenders* of that Faith, of which *Nero* was the *Perſecutor*, and hear it often Preach'd to them by thoſe who are of the ſame *Houſhold*, now it is become the Faith which hath overcome the *World*, which they heard when it was a *new* and a *ſtrange* thing, and the World ſet *againſt* it, from one that was a *ſtranger* to them, and a *Priſoner*. They liv'd in a *Court* in which the name of *Saints* was a greater reproach than that of *Idolaters* and *Infidels*; we may well think it too *great* a reproach to us not to be thought worthy to be ranked among the *chief* of *Saints*. For if the

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Church of *Chriſt* be as he calls it, a City ſet upon a Hill, which cannot be hid; they of the *Court* are upon the *top* of the Hill, whoſe Chriſtian Piety and Vertues would be ſo much more *exemplary* to the whole *City* and *Country*, as their ſtation is more *eminent* and *conſpicuous*.

Indeed the name of *Saints* hath been ſo *Prophan'd* of late, that not only good *Chriſtians*, but honeſt men may be aſhamed of it. For it hath not only been *aſſumed*, but *impropriated* by a Generation of men who take upon them the name of *Saints*, not becauſe they have their Converſation in *Heaven*, but that they may *ſeem* to have a better *Right* and *Title* to inherit the *Earth*, and look upon all other men as *Uſurpers* of thoſe good things which belong to *them*. The *Saints* that muſt judge the *World*, and they themſelves be judged of *no* man. Such *Saints* as they that aroſe up againſt *Moſes* and againſt *Aaron*, ſaying, *All the Congregation are holy, every*

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one of them, and the Lord is among them, wherefore then lift ye up your ſelves above the Congregation of the Lord? And have ſo great a prejudice againſt thoſe of the *Court*, as to be ready to ſay of them, *Exeat aulâ qui vult eſſe pius*, He that will be a *Saint*, muſt not be a *Courtier*. Others there are who would perſwade us, that we cannot be *Saints*, unleſs we be *Romans*: though we hold the ſame *entire Catholick Faith*, which the whole Chriſtian Church received from the *Apoſtles*, and they from *Jeſus the Author and finiſher of our Faith*; yet are not aſhamed to call us *ſchiſmaticks* and *Hereticks*, becauſe we do not believe that we owe an *obedience* and *ſubjection* to the *pretended* ſucceſſors of St. *Peter*, as *Monarchs* of the whole Church, which St. *Peter* himſelf never had, nor ever offered to require upon any ſuch account. But neither are the one the better *Saints*, becauſe they look upon thoſe, who are not of their Faction, as *unholy* and *prophane*; nor the other the better *Catholicks*, becauſe they are ſo impudent,

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as to call us *Schiſmaticks* and *Hereticks*. Our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* ſuffered between two Malefactors, and ſo it is in effect with us; but with this *difference*, there was but one of them that railed upon *him*, but here both exclaim againſt *us*. We have no better way to ſtop their mouths, than to *contend earneſtly for that Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints*, and to ſhew forth the fruits of it in our lives and Converſations, by giving up our ſelves to him, *who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works.* That they who call us *unholy* and *prophane*, may be *aſhamed* when they ſee our Piety and *Devotion* to *God*, who is highly to be honoured in the Congregation of the *Saints*, and to be had in reverence of all them that draw nigh to him: Our *Juſtice* and *Equity*, our *Love* and *Charity*, our *Fidelity* and *Sincerity* in all our Converſation with men: Our *Prudence* in governing our ſelves with that *ſobriety* and *temperance* in the uſe of thoſe things, which

God hath made for our welfare, that they, and all men may ſee, that as we know that all things are lawful for us, ſo we *conſider* that all things are not *expedient*; and though we know that all things are lawful for us, we are not ſo much the *ſervants* of our own liberty, as to be brought under the *power* of any thing. And that they who call us *Schiſmaticks* and *Hereticks* may be *aſhamed* when they ſee that we are the *better Chriſtians*, becauſe we have not been bred and brought up under *Jeſuits*, and that we are the more *Catholick*, becauſe we are not ſo much *Roman* as they would have us. And that as we know no other *Head* of the *Univerſal* Church, but him who is the great *Shepherd* and *Biſhop* of our Souls; ſo we *honour* him, not only by calling him *Lord*, *Lord*, but by *doing* the things which he commands us: though we do no more believe that he hath made *one Catholick* or Univerſal *Biſhop* over all *Biſhops* and *Churches*, than we believe that he hath made one *Catholick* or Univerſal *King* over all *Kings* and

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Kingdoms. And though we do not offer up our Prayers to the *Saints*, nor give that Worſhip to them, which St. *Peter* would not receive from *Cornelius* the *Centurion*, nor an *Angel* from St. *John*, we honour the *memory* of them, holding faſt the profeſſion of their *Faith*, and following the examples of their *good* and *Godly lives*, that we together with them may at laſt receive the end of our Faith, which is the Salvation of our Souls, through our *Lord* and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, to whom with the *Father*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 1. line antepenult, for *thoſe* read *theſe*. p. 14. l. 24. for *our* r. *one*.